

# SYSTEM CONFIGURATION TEAM (SCT)

Meeting Notes  
April 25, 2003

## *1. Greetings and Introductions.*

The April 25, 2003 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held on March 20, 2003 at the NOAA Fisheries offices in Portland, Oregon. The meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin of NOAA Fisheries. The agenda and a list of attendees are attached as Enclosures A and B. Hevlin led a round of introductions and a review of today's agenda. He also distributed copies of the minutes from the March 20 SCT meeting and asked that any comments on the notes be provided to him as soon as possible.

The following is a summary, not a verbatim transcript, of items discussed at the meeting, together with the actions taken on those items. Please note that some of the enclosures referenced may be too lengthy to routinely include with the meeting notes; copies of these documents may be obtained by contacting Kathy Ceballos at 503/230-5420.

## *2. FY'03 CRFM Program Funding Shortfall Follow-Up Report.*

John Kranda reported that the Bonneville study has been deferred for this year, despite the fact that tags have already been purchased; earlier we decided to use those tags to do some work at the B1 spillway, he explained. In the last two weeks, however, there have been some questions about the precision of the John Day testing, so the decision was made to shift the Bonneville tags at John Day during the spring so that we can discern the difference between the two spill treatments at that project, Kranda said. The tagged fish will be released directly into the JBS, he explained; there are no other tags available for that study.

The numbers from the last FY'03 CRFM spreadsheet have not changed, Kranda said; we anticipate that the amount we will have to work with has not changed. The work allowance is just over \$69 million, he said; we have a commitment to re-program an additional \$4.8 million into CRFM from Division, he added. What is lacking is \$6.5 million to cover contractor payments for B2 surface bypass (\$5 million), SBC removal from Lower Granite, (\$500,000) the fourth quarter of the estuary study (\$650,000) and B2 FGE (\$400,000), Kranda said – if we can't find additional FY'03 funds for those projects, that amount will have to come off the top of the FY'04 CRFM appropriation. We're hoping the \$6.5 million will be made available through Corps reprogramming, he added.

My concern is that a funding source for the Upper Columbia steelhead tags has not been identified, Hevlin said. David Wills replied that it may be possible to designate funds for this

program from FY'04 funding, although there is a timing and logistical issue – still, he said, it seems to me that it could be workable. The total cost of the steelhead\ tagging program is about \$1.3 million.

One other item that came out of the most recent FFDWRG meeting is the improvements to adult PIT detection at Bonneville, Kranda said – we weren't sure, at that point, about what to do at Bonneville. More recently, it was agreed that \$150,000 is needed to pay for the Corps portion of the design to get a system in place in 2004; however, there simply isn't any slop in the FY'03 budget, so finding those funds isn't necessarily a slam-dunk, Kranda said. Kim Fodrea said she would like to be sure the SCT is OK with not funding the adult PIT work at Bonneville, because if there is a desire to improve adult PIT detection at Bonneville by 2004, that work needs to get underway as soon as possible – we can't wait another two or three months and expect that the project will be completed in time, she said.

So if we don't spend \$150,000 on the design in FY'03, the consequence is that the improvements will not be installed until FY'05? Hevlin asked. That's correct, Fodrea replied. Rod Woodin asked whether anyone has articulated, in writing, the need for this particular project; Fodrea replied that she has nothing specific at this point. Woodin said that, in his view, the Upper Columbia steelhead tagging is a higher priority than improvements to Bonneville adult PIT.

The discussion turned to the line-items that, although previously designated as a high priority, are now in danger of receiving zero or reduced funding. The list included the following line-items:

- Upper Columbia steelhead tagging (\$1 million)
- Bonneville adult PIT (\$150,000)
- Ice Harbor juvenile PIT design (\$90,000)
- Bonneville corner collector PIT detection (may be funded, but may be a funding shortfall)

Hevlin referenced a few additional items that may require additional FY'03 and/or FY'04 funding, based on the discussion at the most recent FFDWRG meeting. After a few minutes of discussion, Kranda said the bottom line is that the Corps has no additional funding to commit to any of these projects at this point, given the \$6.5 million shortfall just to fund the currently-approved projects. Dana Knudtson said it does not appear that there will be funds available for any additional FY'03 projects unless cut can be found in existing projects. Any additional FY'03 funding will likely borrow from FY'04, he said, although we will continue to look to see what can be done. At a request from Fodrea, Kranda said he will look for a small amount of funding to keep Bonneville adult PIT project alive in FY'03.

### ***3. SRWG Updates.***

Mike Langslay said the next SRWG meeting is 9 a.m. April 30 at the Corps Portland District offices to discuss dam-by-dam study needs for in-river survival. He distributed a schedule of other upcoming proposal development meetings: passage survival/efficiency

planning (April 30), project-specific, bull trout, monitoring technology, estuary, temperature, predation, distribution of draft 2004 research summaries for regional review (May 28), research summary review (June 10), request for proposals (July 28), preliminary 2004 proposals (July 18), SRWG preliminary 2004 proposals (August 22) and annual program review (November 17-21).

Ron Boyce asked if the June 10 prioritization meeting could be moved to either Portland, The Dalles, John Day or McNary due to ODFW travel restrictions; Langslay said he will investigate that possibility.

Langslay then distributed a handout (Enc. C) summarizing the issues identified at the March 27 Portland District SRWG meeting, including the 2003 John Day survival and fish passage efficiency study, the Bonneville juvenile test, the Bonneville adult test, The Dalles survival test and The Dalles surface flow bypass. Please refer to Enclosure C for details.

Hevlin then reviewed the Lower Granite RSW test; he noted that there has been a proposal to hold the next SCT meeting at Lower Granite to observe the RSW in operation. The meeting will be held at the visitor's center on the south side of the dam, beginning at 10 a.m. on May 22. Hevlin distributed an RSW treatment schedule which showed the four-day treatment blocks from April 13 through May 31 (Enc. D); he noted that the kelt study is also going forward at Lower Granite.

Steve Rainey said that, next week, the radio telemetry study will begin at Lower Monumental to get an initial look at survival through the spillway. The plan is to begin a more comprehensive survival study at Lower Monumental next year. Early next week there will also be balloon-tag releases at Ice Harbor to study direct survival through the spillway during plunge condition. He noted that, due to dam safety concerns about the 50-year-old spill gate hoists at McNary, only 16 of the 22 spill bays at that project will be operated for the next two years, which will drive spill per bay upward, a situation which could impact the results from the survival study at that project. There is the potential that more hoists could fail at that project, so the Corps is aggressively pursuing a solution, Gary Fredricks noted. Will there be something in writing on this issue? Boyce asked. Yes, Knudtson replied, although this is a newly-identified issue. In response to a question from Tom Lorz, Rainey said there will be a series of radio tag and PIT-tag releases at Ice Harbor this spring to evaluate study both direct and indirect mortality through the spillway, turbines and bypass system.

Rebecca Kalamasz provided a brief overview of the transport evaluations at the Snake River projects and McNary. In 2003 the survival of in-river and transported survival for wild spring chinook and steelhead will continue. For fall chinook, the consensus was to mark 50,000-70,000 subs at Lyons Ferry, she said; that is going forward as we speak. At yesterday's SRWG meeting, we broke transport into two groups, and talked mainly about operational improvements to study next year. Another SRWG meeting has been set for May 9 in Portland, she added.

#### ***4. FFDRWG Updates.***

It was agreed that there is no need to cover this topic at today's meeting.

#### **5. FY'04 CRFM Program.**

Kranda said the current spreadsheet (Enc. F) includes a somewhat outdated estimate of the FY'04 program. The President's FY'04 budget is \$95 million, he said; this estimate does not include any information about projects that have been deferred from FY'03 to FY'04. Knudtson and Kranda said they hope that a more-current version of the FY'04 CRFM program will be available at the next SCT meeting. Some of the main highlights of the FY'04 budget include:

- B2 surface bypass (\$4.9 million)
- B2 juvenile fish passage studies (\$6 million)
- B2 FGE (\$3 million)
- Spill survival at Lower Monumental (\$2 million)
- The Dalles spillway survival studies (\$4 million, likely to be higher)
- The Dalles spillway modifications (\$7.3 million)
- Estuary studies (\$2.4 million, but will probably be higher)
- B2 fish units intake debris cleaning (\$2.125 million)
- Lower Granite surface bypass program (\$7.490 million)
- Bonneville adult PIT (\$1.25 million)
- The Dalles surface bypass (\$2.5 million)
- Lower Monumental ESBS (\$1.915 million)
- The Dalles surface bypass (\$2.5 million, likely will be higher)
- McNary gas fasttrack (\$3.26 million)
- Adult passage AFEP (\$3 million)
- Bonneville gas fasttrack (\$2.45 million)
- John Day extended length screens (\$6.5 million, likely will be deferred)
- System turbine passage survival (\$2.13 million, likely will be deferred)
- Little Goose gas fasttrack (\$2.115 million, needs more FFDRWG discussion)
- Ice Harbor RSW (\$11.4 million)

Obviously there is still a lot of work to do on this list, said Kranda; there is the potential for a \$6 million overrun from the FY'03 program, so this list will likely look significantly different the next time you see it. We'll give you a status report at the May 22 meeting, he said.

#### **6. Next SCT Meeting Date.**

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for May 22 at Lower Granite Dam. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle.